



Dear Colleagues,

We are proud to invite you and your programme to the **Aaron Thomas Memorial Invitational (formerly known as “The Tradition”)**. We will host a virtual Debate tournament (Cross-Examination, Lincoln-Douglas, Public Form, World’s Schools) from **January 20-22**. We will have an in-person modality for all Individual Events and Congress at our beautiful high school campus on **Sunday, January 22**.

We are committed to having an excellent judging pool, quality hospitality, and unseasonably wonderful weather in south Florida that we simply can’t replicate online.

We remain a Tournament of Champions sanctioned tournament and welcome all of your entries in every division.

For those of you who were not blessed with the opportunity to know Aaron Thomas, he was one of the most joyous personalities to ever grace debate. An avid believer of debate’s transformative power, Aaron was an exceptional debater at the legendary [Kansas City Central programme](#) where he racked up wins and friends amongst opponents and judges alike. He went on to debate collegiately at a number of D3 area teams while actively volunteering at his urban debate league. Aaron was a pinnacle staple in the UDL in Kansas City where he coached multiple teams throughout high and middle schools where he was a friendly face and a beacon of support for countless kids. He was beloved by students and coaches throughout the national circuit and beyond. Aaron tragically died in a car accident on January 1st, 2015. His impact on the collegiate, high school, and even middle school communities was as heartfelt as his loss was sorrowing. His passion and dedication to students and commitment to solidifying opportunities for young people to learn and grow are the guiding principles in the hosting of this tournament.

All Urban Debate League programmes may register unlimited entries in all events for free

Best,

Cypress Bay Speech and Debate

Sohail Jouya - Director of Speech & Debate



TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS BID STATUS

We are pleased to announce that we are Tournament of Champions sanctioned tournament with bids in the following events:

- **Cross-Examination/Policy - Virtual:** Finals
- **Lincoln-Douglas - Virtual:** Finals
- **Public Forum - Virtual:** Quarterfinals (Octofinals - Silver)
- **Congress - In Person:** Tier 2 - Top 16
- **Individual Events - In Person:**
 - If 24 or fewer competitors enter, the top 3 receive bids.
 - If 25 to 72 people compete, the top 7 finalists receive bids.
 - If 73 to 125 or more are in an event, the top 14 semifinalists receive bids
 - If 125 or more are in an event, the top 24 quarterfinalists receive bids

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GENERAL REGULATIONS

EVENTS OFFERED

Event	Divisions	Modality
Cross-Examination Debate	Varsity , Novice	Virtual
Lincoln-Douglas Debate	Varsity , Novice	Virtual
Public Forum	Varsity , Novice	Virtual
World's Schools	Open	Virtual
Congress	Open	In-Person
Extemporaneous Speaking	International , United States	In-Person
Informative (A)	Open	In-Person
Original Oratory (B)	Open	In-Person
Programme Oral Interpretation (B)	Open	In-Person
Humorous Interpretation (B)	Open	In-Person
Dramatic Interpretation (A)	Open	In-Person
Duo (A)	Open	In-Person

SCHEDULES

Virtual - Live Documents will be Linked/Blasted the Day of the Tournament

[Cross-Examination Schedule](#)

Cross-Examination Live Document

[Lincoln-Douglas Schedule](#)

Lincoln-Douglas Live Document

[Public Forum Schedule](#)

Public Forum Live Document

[Worlds Schools Schedule](#)

Worlds Schools Live Document

In Person - Individual Events and Congress

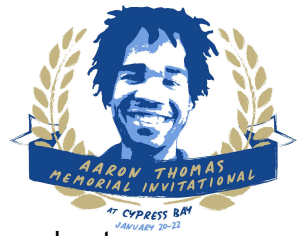
Pattern A Event Schedule
([Informative](#), [Dramatic](#), [Duo](#))

[International Extemp Schedule and Topic Areas](#)

Pattern B Event Schedule
([Oratory](#), [POI](#), [Humorous](#))

[United States Extemp Schedule and Topic Areas](#)

[Congress Event Schedule](#)



Brackets

We will **not** break brackets, the seeding earned by each entry will be respected throughout the entirety of the tournament. The one possible exception would be the Varsity Cross-Examination Urban Debate League Breakout in order to maximise the amount of rounds occurring.

Multiple Event Cross-Entries

Participants may be double-entered in individual events.

Competitors may only compete in one division of Extemporaneous Speaking.

Competitors may only compete in one of the following: Cross-Examination debate, Lincoln-Douglas debate, Public Forum, World Schools, or Congress - double entry in Individual Events is possible for the aforementioned with the exception of Cross-Examination debate.

Independent Entries

We will accept independent entries so long as partnered events have competitors from the same degree-seeking institution.

Forfeit Policy

Any entry arriving later than 15 minutes after the posted start time will be at the risk of forfeit imposed at the exclusive discretion of the event tournament staff. Judges should alert the tabroom once the 15 minute mark has passed without both teams present. Forfeiture necessitates a loss and 0 speaker points. Any team experiencing what they believe to be a legitimate delay should make every attempt to communicate with the tab room if they are going to be late.

Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

All directors, coaches, judges, and debaters who participate in the Aaron Thomas Memorial Invitational are agreeing to be a crucial part of the education process for young people. As such, judges ought to view their participation as part of a process of meaningful pedagogy that is free of explicit bias and discrimination. By accepting a ballot, judges are agreeing to abstain from decisions and commentary that are racist, classist, misogynist, homophobic, transphobic, ableist, or are in any other way expressly problematic. This includes observations or remarks about the physical appearance and attire of students that are disparaging or intended to harass someone's affiliation as a member of a protected class. Please make a concerted effort to minimise the role of implicit bias when interacting with tournament participants and evaluating debate rounds. Decisions should not be affected by your personal beliefs or opinions, nor competitors' perceived race, gender, accent, pitch, attire, or socio-economic status. Be mindful of your words, and be respectful at all times.

Coaches and Judges who fail to adhere to this policy will be immediately removed from the pool and their school will be subject to a \$300 fine.



Equity Committee

We will be employing a fully staffed Equity Committee for the Aaron Thomas Memorial Invitational.

The day of the tournament, the Tabroom page will have two forms posted for access. The first will be a form for reporting any Equity concerns. Students, judges, and coaches who do not act in a manner that is appropriate for an educational setting involving high school students will be asked to leave the tournament and not return. Some examples of behaviors that we view as detrimental to the tournament environment include, but are not limited to racial, sexual, religious, and/or gendered harassment, discrimination, bullying, overly confrontational behavior towards others, and religious discrimination

If you see or experience behavior that you believe to be harassing or discriminatory please fill out the Equity Form and contact Tabroom immediately.

Judging Debate

Judges must be present for every round's Check-In Deadline, have them prepared to oversee disclosure and email chain processes. Please inform your judges to hit "Start Round" on the online Tabroom ballot **immediately** upon receiving the blast from Tabroom in order to confirm they have received their ballot and their intent to judge. If judges have not clicked on "Start Round" by the reporting time, the tournament has full discretion to replace the judge and fine the affiliated school. Conduct a pre-round tech check (i.e. audio and video capability, email chain for evidence exchange) 20 minutes before the scheduled start time.

Speaker points evaluate each debater's participation in the round (e.g. presentation, strategy, decorum). Judges should adhere to the scale below, in order to ensure a fair standard across all rounds. Low-point wins, in which the winning team/debater has lower speaker points than the losing team/debater, are allowed. Any allegations of cheating should be reported to tabroom staff. Please remember, **there can be no ties for speaker points.**

Speaker point range is 30-25 with increments of .1 with the following scale:

29.5–30.0: Excellent performance; perhaps the best debater at the tournament

29.1–29.4: Great performance; no doubt who won the round

28.8–29.0: Minor mistakes; effective and strategic

28.3–28.7: Generally good; but improvement needed

27.8–28.2: Right idea; but something to be desired

27.3–27.7: Major mistakes; hard to follow

27.0–27.2: Obvious mistakes; little advancement

26.0–26.9: Not ready for this division or tournament

25: Rude, offensive, ignorant; questionable conduct or potential cheating - the ultimate punitive response



Evidentiary Ethics and Challenge Process

Please see below for guidance on handling various evidence challenges. If necessary, you may consult tabroom staff, but ultimately must still make a decision to determine the outcome of the round.

- If a team/competitor cannot produce evidence read in the round, disregard the evidence and make a decision as if it were never mentioned.
- If a team/competitor claims that certain evidence is of low quality, from a disreputable source, uses a flawed methodology, or similar issues, evaluate the claim(s) based on arguments made during the debate. You may call for the evidence during or after the round, then make a decision.
- If a team/competitor alleges that certain evidence is fabricated, promptly stop the round, examine the evidence in question, and make a decision based solely on the evidence challenge. Be sure to confirm the specific intent to issue a formal evidence challenge before stopping the debate.

Card Clipping

Card clipping is one of the more serious intellectual sins plaguing the activity which deserves grave attention and genuine attempts to deter the practice. Our definition of card clipping is similar to the National Debate Coaches Association which currently defines card clipping as follows, “A judge should find **clipping has occurred when a debater represents they have read five words or more that they did not read in any speech.** If the judge finds that clipping has occurred the penalty is a loss for the team and zero speaker points for the debater who “clipped.” Additionally, **clipping also includes the practice of intentionally highlighting/reading evidence to propose an argument clearly contrary to the author’s/evidence’s intent.**

Technical malfunction isn’t an excuse for clipping. Debaters have an obligation to accurately represent the material they have read. If a judge finds that students represented they read material that they did not read then it’s clipping and penalties should be imposed even if the judge doesn’t think there was ill intent.

There are three possible outcomes:

- If a team is found guilty of clipping, the penalty is a loss and zero speaker points.
- If there is an investigation and no clipping is to have been found, the judge’s original decision will be preserved.
- If a team is believed to have dishonestly fabricated a false accusation of clipping the penalty is a loss and zero speaker points for both debaters on the team who made the false accusation.



Paraphrasing is highly discourage by the tournament hosts and is subject to evidentiary ethics challenges. Please be an active part of the solution and discourage and prohibit your debaters from engaging in such an academically bankrupted practise.

Judging Speech

For the purposes of this tournament and to cater to a community pool of judges, speaker points will be utilised as a tiebreaker. **The range will resemble a grading rubric on a 100-50 point scale.**



CROSS-EXAMINATION DEBATE

The tournament is committed to providing a full-on set of preliminary and elimination round in CX/Policy debate in order to foster the event in this region. We highly encourage any and all programmes with CX entries to send the full amount of entries possible to create the most robust tournament experience possible.

TOPIC	PREP
Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially increase its security cooperation with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in one or more of the following areas: artificial intelligence, biotechnology, cybersecurity.	8 minutes of preparation time, per team

Elimination Round Coin Flips:

We will be using the built in Tabroom online coin flip feature for elimination rounds. The flip will be automatically pushed ten minutes after the pairings blast, please keep this in mind to ensure appropriate and timely disclosure occurs for both teams prior to the flip. The higher seed will have the opportunity to call the flip. The winner of the flip will have three minutes to determine their side. If the higher seeded team fails to select a side after the three minutes have elapsed, the other team will have the opportunity to select. Please instruct your students to prepare for this practise.

Email chains ought to be used to send speech documents to all competitors and judges prior to each speech.

Varsity

The top division of the tournament and our most experienced judges will be reserved in a pool. A finals TOC bid will be allocated to this division's finalists. NDCA Baker Points will be allocated to all teams in this division.

For each entry, we request 3 rounds of coverage from a judge who is a qualified adjudicator with an active Tabroom account. It is likely we won't use the entirety of coverage for those judges and we reserve the ability to place those judges in divisions where we believe it is most suitable. If any programme is having difficulties in securing adequate judging, please contact the tournament director.

Mutual Judging Preferences will be in place for this division. Please ensure your preferences are submitted in Tabroom by the stated deadline.

There will be 6 rounds of competition where we will break to the appropriate . Rounds 1 and 2 are randomly preset and each subsequent round will be power-matched high-low for each relevant bracket. All elimination rounds will have a panel of three judges.



There will also be a Urban Debate League breakout for all non-advancing UDL entries in this division.

Tiebreakers will be in the following order: Win-Loss record, single drop high-low speaker points, double drop high-low, ranks, opponent record, and Z score.

Novice

Novice students are defined as students who are in their first year of speech and/or debate competition in high school.

The Novice Cross-Examination division will be strictly limited to the Novice Policy Debate Packet as openly provided to all debaters by the National Debate Coaches Association. Debaters utilising evidence/arguments outside the packet will receive an auto-loss.

There will be a strong effort to put quality judges with debate experience into some novice preliminary rounds but especially in the elimination rounds. The majority of judges in this division will be provided our community pool.

There will be 6 rounds of competition where we will break to the appropriate set of elimination rounds. Rounds 1 and 2 are randomly preset and each subsequent round will be power-matched high-low for each relevant bracket. All elimination rounds will have a panel of three judges.

Tiebreakers will be in the following order: Win-Loss record, opponent record, high/low ranks, double high and Z score.



LINCOLN-DOUGLAS DEBATE

TOPIC	PREP
Resolved: Justice requires open borders for human migration.	5 minutes of preparation time, per team

Elimination Round Coin Flips:

We will be using the built in Tabroom online coin flip feature for elimination rounds. The flip will be automatically pushed ten minutes after the pairings blast, please keep this in mind to ensure appropriate and timely disclosure occurs for both teams prior to the flip. The higher seed will have the opportunity to call the flip. The winner of the flip will have three minutes to determine their side. If the higher seeded team fails to select a side after the three minutes have elapsed, the other team will have the opportunity to select. Please instruct your students to prepare for this practise.

Email chains ought to be used to send speech documents to all competitors and judges prior to each speech.

Varsity

The top division of the tournament and our most experienced judges will be reserved in a pool. A finals TOC bid will be allocated to this division's finalists. NDCA Baker Points will be allocated to all teams in this division

For each entry, we request 3 rounds of coverage from a judge who is a qualified adjudicator with an active Tabroom account. It is likely we won't use the entirety of coverage for those judges and we reserve the ability to place those judges in divisions where we believe it is most suitable. If any programme is having difficulties in securing adequate judging, please contact the tournament director.

Mutual Judging Preferences will be in place for this division. Please ensure your preferences are submitted in Tabroom by the stated deadline. All judges in this division must have a posted paradigm on Tabroom. The tournament reserves the right to determine the role, division, and qualifications of judges.

There will be 6 rounds of competition where we will break to octofinals. Rounds 1 and 2 are randomly preset and each subsequent round will be power-matched high-low for each relevant bracket. All elimination rounds will have a panel of three judges.

Tiebreakers will be in the following order: Win-Loss record, single drop high-low speaker points, double drop high-low, ranks, opponent record, and Z score.

Novice



Novice students are defined as students who are in their first year of speech and/or debate competition in high school.

There will be a strong effort to put quality judges with debate experience into novice preliminary rounds but especially in the elimination rounds. The majority of judges in this division will be provided our community pool.

There will be 6 rounds of competition where we will break to quarterfinals. Rounds 1 and 2 are randomly preset and each subsequent round will be power-matched high-low for each relevant bracket. All elimination rounds will have a panel of three judges.

Tiebreakers will be in the following order: Win-Loss record, opponent record, high/low ranks, double high/low ranks, and Z score.



PUBLIC FORUM

TOPIC	PREP
Resolved: The United States Federal Government should increase its diplomatic efforts to peacefully resolve internal armed conflicts in West Asia.	3 minutes of preparation time, per team

Important Note Regarding Public Forum at the Aaron Thomas Memorial Invitational

We will not be utilising coinflips for preliminary round side and ordering - rather, the tournament will randomly assign Affirmative and Negative designations to teams with the expectation of the Affirmative team speaking first (the way God intended) and the Negative team following. Coin flips in elimination rounds are strictly for side (if the pairing is not side constrained/locked) in which the Affirmative will still be required to speak first.

Elimination Round Coin Flips:

We will be using the built in Tabroom online coin flip feature for elimination rounds. The flip will be automatically pushed ten minutes after the pairings blast, please keep this in mind to ensure appropriate and timely disclosure occurs for both teams prior to the flip. The higher seed will have the opportunity to call the flip. The winner of the flip will have three minutes to determine their side. If the higher seeded team fails to select a side after the three minutes have elapsed, the other team will have the opportunity to select. Please instruct your students to prepare for this practise.

Email chains ought to be used to send speech documents to all competitors and judges prior to each speech - the “call for cards” process is tedious, time-consuming, and unnecessary. Please help ensure that our tournament is as timely as possible by instructing your debaters and judges to follow this procedure.

Varsity

The top division of the tournament and our most experienced judges will be reserved in a pool. A Finals TOC bid will be allocated to this division's quarterfinalist - silver bids will be awarded to octofinalists. NDCA Baker Points will be allocated to all teams in this division.

For each entry, we request 3 rounds of coverage from a judge who is a qualified adjudicator with an active Tabroom account. It is likely we won't use the entirety of coverage for those judges and we reserve the ability to place those judges in divisions where we believe it is most suitable. If any programme is having difficulties in securing adequate judging, please contact the tournament director.

A requisite number of strikes will be awarded to each entry (not school) for this division. Please ensure your preferences are submitted in Tabroom by the stated deadline. To ensure informed strikes, each judge *must* have a paradigm posted on Tabroom.



There will be 6 rounds of competition where we will break to octofinals. Rounds 1 and 2 are randomly preset and each subsequent round will be power-matched high-low for each relevant bracket. All elimination rounds will have a panel of three judges.

Tiebreakers will be in the following order: Win-Loss record, single drop high-low speaker points, double drop high-low, ranks, opponent record, and Z score.

Novice

Novice students are defined as students who are in their first year of speech and/or debate competition in high school.

The majority of judges in this division will be provided our community pool.

There will be 6 rounds of competition where we will break to quarterfinals. Rounds 1 and 2 are randomly preset and each subsequent round will be power-matched high-low for each relevant bracket. All elimination rounds will have a panel of three judges.

Tiebreakers will be in the following order: Win-Loss record, opponent record, high/low ranks, double high/low ranks, and Z score.



WORLD'S SCHOOLS

There will be a single, open division for World's Schools online.

MOTIONS/RESOLUTIONS	
Round 1 & 2 (Switch Sides)	This House believes it's time to give Puerto Rico statehood into the United States of America.
Round 3	This House should encourage private investment in space exploration.
Round 4	<i>Spontaneous Motion to be released with pairings</i>
Semifinals	The United States federal government should nationalize Twitter as a public good.
Finals	<i>Spontaneous Motion to be released with pairings</i>



CONGRESS

Varsity

Congress in both divisions will be in person at Cypress Bay High School. [Legislation has been posted on Tabroom for each session.](#) There will be two preliminary rounds followed by a Final Super Session. We will be utilizing the direction questioning process.

Novice

Novice students are defined as students who are in their first year of speech and/or debate competition in high school. Congress in both divisions will be in person at Cypress Bay High School. [Legislation has been posted on Tabroom for each session.](#) There will be two preliminary rounds followed by a Final Super Session. We will be utilizing the direction questioning process.

EXTEMPORANEOUS SPEAKING

There will be an International and United States divisions.

There will be three preliminary rounds followed by cumulative Final. Finals in International and United States divisions will have Cross-Examination periods post-speech.

EXTEMP TOPIC AREAS		
	<u>International</u>	<u>United States</u>
Round 1	Middle East & North Africa	Economy & Social Welfare
Round 2	Latin America	Constitutional Issues & The Courts
Round 3	Europe	Culture
Finals	The World This Week	Current Legislative Efforts



INDIVIDUAL EVENTS

Speech events will be performed live and in person at Cypress Bay High School on Sunday, January 22nd. Students may double enter. In the scripted events no student can use the same primary source material for more than one event even if it is cut differently. In addition to the above rule, NSDA rules and time limits will apply to all events.

Pattern A	Pattern B
International Extemp	Original Oratory
United States Extemp	Programme Oral Interp
Dramatic Interp	Humourous Interp
Informative Speaking	
Duo	